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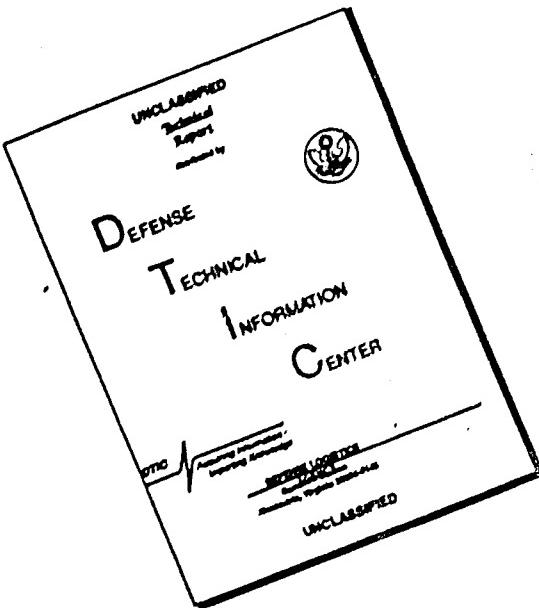
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**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310**

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGDA (M) (3 Nov 70) FOR OT UT 702193

12 November 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 13th Aviation Battalion, for Period Ending 30 April 1970 (U)

SEE DISTRIBUTION

AD512359

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2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

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*Kenneth G. Wickham*

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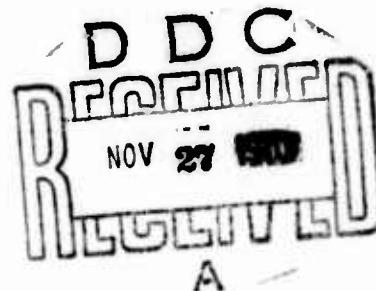
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
Headquarters, 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat)  
APO San Francisco 96296

AVBABN-GC

9 May 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat), for the Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U).

CINCUSARPAC, ATTN: GPOP-DT, APO San Francisco 96558  
Commanding General, USARV, ATTN: AVHGC-DST, APO San Francisco 96375  
Commanding General, 1st Aviation Brigade, ATTN: AVBAGC-O, APO San Francisco 96384  
Commanding Officer, 164th Aviation Group (Combat), ATTN: AVBACE-C, APO San Francisco 96215

1. (C) Operations: Significant Activities:

a. (U) Unit Mission: The 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt) constituted as TASK FORCE GUARDIAN was placed in direct support of the 21st ARVN Division on 1 January 1970. During this reporting period there has been no change in this mission.

b. (U) Organization: Under TASK FORCE GUARDIAN the 162nd Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) and the 191st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) were placed under operational control of the 307th Aviation Battalion (Cbt) at Can Tho. At the end of March Alpha Troop, 3/17 Air Cavalry Squadron which had been OPCON to TASK FORCE GUARDIAN returned to the 12th Aviation Group. Charley Troop, 16th Air Cavalry, a former unit of the 1st Infantry Division, was reassigned to the 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt) permanently. On 23 March the 221st Aviation Company (Util A/P) relocated from Soc Trang AAF to Can Tho AAF, APO San Francisco 96215. At the close of the reporting period the organization of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat) was as follows (Incl 1):

- (1) HHC, 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt), APO San Francisco 96296.
- (2) 121st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel), APO San Francisco 96296.
- (3) 162nd Aviation Company (Aslt Hel), APO San Francisco 96215.
- (4) 191st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel), APO San Francisco 96215.
- (5) 221st Aviation Company (Util A/P), APO San Francisco 96215.

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(6) 336th Aviation Company (Aalt Hel), APO San Francisco 96296.

(7) C Troop, 16th Air Cavalry Squadron, APO San Francisco 96296.

c. (C) Changes in command and staff:

(1) MAJ LOUIS E. SOKOWOSKI, 292-30-7556, ADA, was assigned as the Executive Officer of the Battalion on 23 Mar 1970. MAJ JOSEPH V. LENOCI, 137-26-5322, FA, was reassigned to 164th Aviation Group (Cbt).

(2) CPT PAUL C. HOLLOWELL II, 254-60-1532, INF, was assigned as the Battalion S-2 on 6 Feb 1970. CPT HAROLD L. HERBERT, 214-50-5772, FA, was reassigned to CONUS.

(3) CPT ROGER S. COLLINS, 263-82-7177, ADA, was assigned as the Commanding Officer, HHC, 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt) on 19 Apr 1970. CPT BRADFORD M. BROWN, 545-66-7701, INF, was reassigned to CONUS.

(4) CPT BARRY W. MECKER, 028-28-2384, CE, was assigned as the Battalion S-4 on 21 Mar 1970. CPT THOMAS R. McLAUGHLIN, 092-34-2152, ADA, was reassigned to CONUS.

(5) MAJ HENRY T. BROWN JR, 502-32-6354, CE, was assigned as the Commanding Officer, 121st Aviation Company (Aalt Hel) on 15 Feb 1970. MAJ CHARLES S. KETTLES, 368-26-6932, FA, was reassigned within the 1st Aviation Brigade.

(6) MAJ THOMAS E. BEAUCHAMP, 225-44-6703, INF, was assigned as the Commanding Officer, 162nd Aviation Company (Aalt Hel) on 18 Apr 1970. MAJ KENNETH D. LOVELESS, 467-52-0689, AR, was reassigned to CONUS.

d. (C) Unit strength: See Incl 2.

e. (C) Aircraft status: See Incl 3.

f. (C) Operational results: See Incl 4.

g. (C) Operations:

(1) The 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt), during the reporting period, continued to provide aviation assets for preplanned airmobile assaults, troop insertions and extractions, air cavalry operations, tactical and administrative support, command liaison, medical evacuation and detailed visual reconnaissance in direct support of the 21st ARVN Division. Tactical and

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administrative assets for the 21st ARVN Division were provided by the elements of the Battalion constituted in TASK FORCE GUARDIAN; the 121st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel), 336th Aviation Company (Aslt Hel), 221st Aviation Company (Util A/P) and C Troop, 16th Air Cavalry Squadron. During the portion of the reporting period prior to 31 March, A Troop, 3rd of the 17th Air Cavalry Squadron was OPCON to the 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt). In late March C Troop, 16th Air Cavalry Squadron arrived at Soc Trang and was permanently assigned to the 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt) on 5 April 1970. On 1 April, C Troop assumed the mission formerly performed by A Troop in the 42nd DTA. Tactical support provided by TASK FORCE GUARDIAN consisted of mini-packages and air cavalry packages. A mini-package consists of five UH-1D/H utility helicopter troop transports, a fire team of UH-1B/C utility helicopter gunships and a UH-1D/H utility helicopter Command and Control ship. An air cavalry package consists of four OH-6A light observation scout helicopters, four AH-1G attack helicopter gunships, four UH-1H utility helicopter troop transports and a UH-1H utility helicopter Command and Control ship. Tactical missions are also being conducted by the Vietnamese Air Force, 217th and 211th Helicopter Squadrons, located at Bien Thuy AFB. This support consists of a flight of (5 to 8) VNAF UH-1H utility helicopter troop transports, while the 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt) provides the gunship support, a heavy fire team (three UH-1B/C gunships or three AH-1G attack helicopters), and a left seat (O-3 or above, Air Mission Commander qualified) co-pilot for the VNAF Command and Control helicopter. The VNAF is presently training gunship pilots and from time to time they replace US Army gunship assets with their UH-1H model gunships. It is anticipated that all VNAF combat air assaults are forthcoming.

(2) Airmobile Operations: The Battalion supported 422 airmobile operations during the reporting period, an increase of 147 over the last reporting period. Some of the significant operations are listed below:

(a) Combat operation of 5 February 1970: The 162nd Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) supported Ba Xuyen Province and the 21st ARVN Division on an operation staged out of Soc Trang Army Airfield which is approximately 100 miles south of Saigon, coordinates XR 058591. The task force organization consisted of five UH-1H utility helicopter troop transports, three UH-1C utility helicopter gunships and one UH-1H utility helicopter Command and Control aircraft. Two hundred Regional Force/Popular Force troops were lifted into a landing zone center of mass XR 030780 at 1300 L. The mission was to conduct a raid against a known Viet Cong company believed to be in the area. Immediate contact was made by the gunships and additional gunships were requested. On the troop insertions one ARVN passenger was seriously wounded and the troop transports took heavy fire. Between insertions the gunships continued to engage the enemy. As enemy resistance was

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broken the friendly troops swept the area. A total of 27 KBA's (killed by air) were accounted for by the Copperheads, armed platoon, of the 162nd. Intelligence indicated the VC company had been destroyed. All assets were released at 2000 L.

(b) Combat operations of 27 February 1970: The 121st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) supported the 33rd Regiment, 21st ARVN Division in an operation staged out of Vi Thanh, WR 537822, which is located approximately 125 miles southwest of Saigon. The task organization consisted of five UH-1D/H utility helicopter troop transports, three UH-1B utility helicopter gunships and one UH-1H utility helicopter Command and Control ship. The operation began at 0900 L and the mission was to insert elements of the Regiment into a landing zone center of mass WR 3570. Initial contact was made with VC/NVA elements believed to be 500 - 600 men in size. The Viking gunships provided the majority of the overhead fire support and were credited with 21 KBA's (killed by air), destroying 40 enemy structures and bunkers, and 42 sampans. The enemy force was driven back and all assets were released at 1700 hours L.

(c) Combat operation of 1 March 1970: The 121st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) supported Bac Lieu Province on an operation staged out of Bac Lieu, WR 791281, approximately 175 miles south of Saigon. The task force organization was similar to that in (b) above. The operation was begun at 0800 when 150 Regional Force/Popular Force troops were inserted into a landing zone center of mass XR 155389. As the troops swept the area Viking gunships of the 121st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) covered their advance with close overhead support and were credited with 17 KBA's, 7 enemy structures destroyed and 27 sampans destroyed. The operation was terminated at 1200 L and all assets were released to a PM operation.

(d) Combat operation of 9 March 1970: The 191st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) supported the 9th ARVN Division in an operation staging out of Vinh Long, XS 040331. The task force organization consisted of five UH-1H utility helicopter troop transports, three UH-1C utility helicopter gunships and one UH-1H utility helicopter Command and Control ship. The operation began at 0800 L when troops of the 9th ARVN Division were inserted into a landing zone center of mass XS 185111. The area was found to be a Viet Cong stronghold. One troop transport helicopter was hit on the initial insertion and was forced down. Another troop transport helicopter made an immediate extraction of the crew of the downed helicopter. A fire team of two AH-1G Cobra attack helicopters arrived and began to assist the Bounty Hunters of the 191st in placing rocket fire on the entrenched Viet Cong. USAF F-100 fighter bombers were used as were US Navy OV-10 Broncos. Finally the enemy was silenced and later troop sweeps revealed that a Viet Cong command post

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and hospital complex had been destroyed. Heavy casualties were suffered by the enemy.

(e) Combat operation of 19 April 1970: C Troop, 16th Air Cavalry Squadron supported the 33rd Regiment, 21st ARVN Division out of the Regimental CP Near Ca Mau. The task force consisted of four OH-6A scout helicopters, four AH-1G attack helicopters, four UH-1H utility helicopter troop transports and one UH-1H Command and Control ship. The operation began at 0730 when the Regiment was inserted into a landing zone center of ~~mass~~ WZ 4194. This area is approximately 25 kilometers south and east of Ca Mau stagefield AR 169139. Intelligence reports revealed the existence of a Viet Cong POW camp where it was suspected that Mohawk (OV-10) pilots were being held captive. The last word heard from the pilots after their crash was that they were in good condition and were heading north. At 0830 an OH-6A Scout spotted a volley ball net in a clearing. Immediate insertions revealed the existence of a complex Viet Cong base camp with cages for keeping prisoners. Two illegible military identification cards were found. The Viet Cong had rapidly deserted the camp and no contact was made. All assets were released at 1800 L.

(f) Additional summaries:

(1) On 22 April 1970 the 121st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) claimed 25 KBA's in support of RF/FF troops in An Xuyen Province.

(2) On 24 April 1970 the 121st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) claimed 35 KBA's in support of the 33rd Regiment in Choung Thien Province.

(3) On 28 April 1970 C Troop, 16th Air Cavalry Squadron claimed 17 KBA's in a 5 day operation in support of the 32nd Regiment in Phong Ding Province.

(4) On 23 April 1970 the 191st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) claimed 19 KBA's in support of the 21st ARVN Division in Choung Thien Province.

h. (U) Training: The 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt) continued to send personnel to various schools and courses.

(1) Army Aviation Refresher Training Courses: 9, Vung Tau.

(2) OH-58A Transition: 1, Vung Tau.

(3) 1st Aviation Brigade Instructor Pilot Course: 4, Long Binh.

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i. (U) Morale and Discipline: The number of approved recommendations for awards received during this reporting period are shown by the types and totals awarded: Silver Star: 6, Distinguished Flying Cross: 59, Bronze Star: 107, Air Medal "V": 155, Air Medal: 227, ARCOM "V": 183, ARCOM: 359, Purple Heart: 16, Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry: 7.

(1) During the reporting period the number of approved disciplinary actions taken under UCMJ were:

OFFICERS	WARRANT OFFICERS	EM
Generals	0	0
Specials	0	3
Summarys	0	0
Article 15's	0	116

(2) The number of personnel that took R&R or leave to various countries are denoted below:

Australia	57	Hawaii	72	Bangkok	34
Hong Kong	20	Taipei	20	Tokyo	10

j. (U) Safety:

(1) During this reporting period the Battalion has experienced eight reportable accidents, approximately one accident per 4,984 flying hours, bringing the total hours for FY 70 to 116,283.

(2) During this reporting period none of the assault helicopter companies had a zero accident rate. HHC with two aircraft assigned had zero accidents.

(3) Accident statistics and flying hours for 1 February 1970 to 30 April 1970 are as follows:

UNIT	ACCIDENTS	INCIDENTS	FORCED	PRECAUTIONARY	FLIGHT	RATE
			LANDINGS	LNDINGS	HOURS	
HHC	0	0	1	2	483	0.0
121	1	2	0	0	8,040	12.4
162	1	0	1	2	7,884	12.2
191	2	0	0	1	7,392	27.1
221	1	0	0	0	5,334	18.3

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UNIT	ACCIDENTS	INCIDENTS	FORCED LANDINGS	PRECAUTIONARY LANDINGS	FLIGHT HOURS	RATE
336 C/16	2 1	2 0	0 0	4 2	8,083 2,706	23.4 36.9
TOTAL	8	4	2	11	39,877	

2. (C) Section 2, Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations and Command Action.

a. (U) Personnel.

(1) Low enlisted strength:

(a) Observation: During the past quarter aviator status has risen from a low of 68% to the present level of 90% strength. In the meantime the EM strength level has remained consistently below the authorized level and is, for example in the 162nd Aviation Company (Avlt Hel), presently below 80%. This shortage of personnel is extremely critical in the flight platoons and the maintenance platoons, this shortage results in enlisted men in the company performing guard duty every other night. Another result is that the maintenance platoon has too few personnel to man periodic inspection teams at full strength and because of this, great difficulty is experienced maintaining a timely flow of aircraft into and out of maintenance. In many cases the critical shortages result in first echelon maintenance not being performed. This directly contributes to the late aircraft departures that have been experienced in the last quarter.

(b) Evaluation: This enlisted shortage creates an undue hardship on all personnel. The level of missions have remained the same yet the number of personnel available to prepare aircraft for missions remains low. This directly affects the unit's ability to function in a satisfactory manner.

(c) Recommendation: Continued emphasis be placed on requisitions of new replacement personnel.

(d) Command Action: Enlisted personnel requirements are monitored on a continuing basis and higher headquarters is kept informed of critical shortages. Commanders of subordinate units are aware of the necessity of close supervision of remaining personnel to insure maximum output under the present circumstances.

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## (2) Enlisted MOS shortages:

(a) Observation: The maintenance section is becoming short handed on school trained mechanics. Although many skills can be taught by on the job training, the more specialized skills cannot.

(b) Evaluation: What few enlisted replacement personnel that are received are generally 67N20 (Crew Chief), but the maintenance section is in most cases short of the more specialized skills of prop and rotor repairmen, electricians and engine repairmen.

(c) Recommendation: That specialized screening be set up at all replacement centers and at Group and Battalion level. A system of controls should be placed on critical MOS's.

(d) Command Action: All incoming personnel are carefully screened for critical MOS's. Higher headquarters is aware of the shortages but in many cases is unable to correct the situation. Replacement centers must assign personnel based on priority as well as shortages. Critical MOS's are closely controlled at all times. Commanders have been directed to more effectively use the personnel they have and insure OJT is constantly in effect.

## b.(C) Intelligence:

### (1) Problems with Signal Operating Instructions (SOI).

(a) Observation: During this reporting period, there have been numerous occasions where the frequency that is published in the SOI is incorrect due to frequent changes in the SOI. A change of the ground force's frequency is made and in many cases support elements are unaware of this change. Additionally, many ground units will operate on an unassigned frequency and not notify those with a need to know.

(b) Evaluation: Numerous SOI changes combined with improper usage of frequencies by units create a substantial communications problem from time to time. SOI changes are made prior to authorized change times.

(c) Recommendations: That SOI changes be a controlled procedure and that steps be taken to insure that changes are widely disseminated. Units should be prohibited from operating on unauthorized frequencies.

(d) Command Action: One of the reasons for frequent SOI changes is that compromises are frequent. Commanders have been impressed with the

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importance of communications security. Timely SOI changes are an important part of the program to maintain communications security and foil enemy attempts at interception. Supported units are aware of the problems of the use of unauthorized frequencies and are attempting to put a stop to it.

(2) Problems with Crypto storage at remote field sites.

(a) Observation: The Crypto material used for O-1 aircraft stationed at remote field sites have no adequate storage area. All material to include key list, KYK-28 and KY-28 should be secured in a fixed and locked container and all persons who have access to these items or areas should have the proper clearance. The stagefields in question are limited in space and storage areas and in most cases do not have the required facilities to safeguard Crypto material.

(b) Recommendation: That higher commanders place emphasis on safeguarding of Crypto material in remote areas and that these areas be provided with proper safeguarding material or equipment. In the case of proper clearances, an arrangement between two parties having Crypto material could be made so that the personnel with the proper clearance could key the KYK-28 and KY-28 from only one key list. By using the province advisory team key list the danger of loss of the separate key list would be eliminated. Personnel without proper clearance would also no longer have access to classified material.

(c) Command Action: Maximum emphasis has been placed on safeguarding of Crypto material. Subordinate commanders responsible for Crypto material have been directed to insure that every step necessary to insure safeguarding of subject material has been taken. Province or sector advisory teams have also been requested to fully cooperate in assisting in safeguarding materials.

c. (U) Operations:

(1) Airmobile Operations (Mini-package).

(a) Observation: The mini-package (as defined in paragraph 1. g. (1), page 3) concept works well when supporting Regional Force/Popular Force troops or provinces and sectors in the open rice paddies of the northern and eastern areas of the 42nd DTA (Southern IV Corps - south of the Bassac River). The small number of lift ships (five) becomes insufficient when being used to transport regular ARVN troops, particularly when working in areas that are known to contain large enemy forces.

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(b) Evaluation: Aviation elements in large combat operations are used in insufficient numbers to overwhelm the enemy. As a result in many cases friendly troops are at a serious disadvantage on insertions into enemy areas.

(c) Recommendation: That large combined packages of ten lift helicopters (UH-1D/H) or more be used when contemplating movement of divisional units and particularly when numerous lifts are planned into few landing zones. If this is done there will be an increase in the shock effect against the enemy forces and he will be overwhelmed by the superior size of the friendly forces.

(d) Command Action: At this time the Senior Advisor of the 21st ARVN Division and the Commanding General of the Division do not desire to insert troops in larger numbers than that which requires five lift ships. On rare occasions when larger lifts are desired mini-packages are combined.

(2) Airmobile Raids:

(a) Observation: The raid tactic is a particularly successful method of assault into enemy locations. In the opposite case when the Command and Control helicopter or gunships arrive in the area prior to the lifts, dependent upon the time span, the enemy is alerted to the fact airmobile insertions are imminent. The enemy then is able to retreat or if he so desires prepare an unwelcome greeting for the friendly air and ground assets. When raid tactics are used the enemy is caught off guard and in many cases, caught in the open and is unable to move rapidly without being observed. Friendly ground forces are generally more successful when they have been inserted using raid type tactics.

(b) Evaluation: Raids are more successful in many cases against the type of enemy forces encountered in the 42nd DTA. Greater surprise and effectiveness against the enemy units are generally prevalent. In such cases the enemy is unable to prepare effective defenses or retreat.

(c) Command Action: Air Mission Commanders have been trained in the use of the raid. The Air Mission Commander must act as a knowledgeable advisor to the Airmobile Task Force Commander in the back seat and recommend to him what type of tactic is believed to offer the possibility of the greatest amount of success under the existing circumstances. Supported units have been instructed in the benefits of surprise in operations against enemy forces.

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(3) Autumn Mist:

(a) Observation: Autumn Mist is the name given to an operation conducted by an assault helicopter company in which selected areas are defoliated via a UH-1H utility helicopter rigged with equipment designed to dispense defoliant chemicals. During the past reporting period the 162nd Aviation Company has flown this defoliant mission with mixed success. Many areas vital to enemy movement have been defoliated. However, one aviator was killed and several wounded. The reason for this is that the mission is not flown as defined. Many times known enemy areas are selected for defoliation and numerous passes are required over the same area. Violation of the cardinal principles of the Autumn Mist mission have resulted in aircraft taking numerous hits day after day.

(b) Evaluation: Autumn Mist is not flown as it should be. Ground Mission Commanders even when advised of the dangers involved continue in an unsafe manner.

(c) Recommendation: That Autumn Mist as outlined in the mission format be the mission flown. That heavily enemy infested areas be cleaned out prior to the mission being performed over these areas. That full gunship suppressive fires be allowed in suspected areas. Two fire teams should be available, one UH-1C gunship fire team to support the defoliation aircraft and one AH-1G attack helicopter fire team available for pre-strikes in the flight path of the defoliation aircraft.

(d) Command Action: This mission as flown is often the target of enemy fires. Unit commanders have been instructed in the importance of insuring that their organic gunships provide proper cover for the mission. Ground forces personnel who conduct this mission have been made well aware of the proper way to fly the mission. The aircraft commander of the defoliation aircraft who is in a sense the Air Mission Commander, must emphasize the points he feels are significant concerning particular defoliation missions as far as enemy fires, rules of engagement and flight paths. It has been found that in some cases this hasn't been the practice.

(4) Day Phantom:

(1) Observation: Day Phantom is a mission flown by two UH-1B/C helicopter gunships or two AH-1G attack helicopters and one UH-1D/H utility helicopter Command and Control ship. The mission is generally assigned to separate provinces daily. The province provides a back seat (Airmobile Task Force Commander) who acts as the clearing authority on fire requests. The package then scouts suspected enemy areas and attempts to destroy enemy

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troops and structures once discovered. The mission is successful when the areas under consideration are free fire areas and when the back seat actually has the authority to authorize strikes. Additionally it has been observed that AH-1G gunships while able to deliver substantial ordnance are weak in the area of low level reconnaissance of targets. The AH-1G at low speeds and low level is vulnerable to enemy fire.

(b) Evaluation: The Day Phantom is a successful mission when the areas selected are free fire areas and when the back seat province representative has authority to clear fire into areas. UH-1B/C gunships are more suited to this type of mission than are AH-1G's because of the former's inherently better performance at low level and low speeds visa relative invulnerability to enemy fire and increased visual reconnaissance capabilities.

(c) Command Action: The Day Phantom is a responsibility of the 307th Aviation Battalion (Cbt). This headquarters has no control over the mission assignment or employment. Such information as that noted above has been furnished to the 307th Aviation Battalion (Cbt).

(5) Night Phantom (Moc Hoa):

(a) Observation: The night hunter - killer team composed of one UH-1C helicopter gunship, one UH-1H armed helicopter and one UH-1H Command and Control aircraft is required to report to Moc Hoa near the Cambodian border nightly. The mission of the package is to perform visual reconnaissance and engage targets of opportunity in the Moc Hoa area. However, the vast majority of the time the one UH-1H transport helicopter spends the time on miscellaneous type administrative/resupply missions. When the package is diverted to other areas such as Cao Lanh, Chi Lang or Cai Cai there is no one at the receiving end who is prepared to use the assets. While at Moc Hoa assets are required to park in an unsecure area. On several occasions indigenous personnel have come through the wire and have stolen equipment from parked aircraft. And on several occasions the area has been mortared.

(b) Evaluation: The Night Phantom mission to Moc Hoa is misused and normally not employed. Poor coordination is evident.

(c) Recommendation: That the mission be terminated at Moc Hoa and the night hunter - killer package be assigned throughout the IV Corps as required on a nightly basis. The 7/1 Air Cavalry Squadron (Blackhawk TOC) is somewhat unsuccessful at controlling the mission, therefore control should be returned to the 307th Aviation Battalion (Cbt).

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(d) Command Action: This mission is not under control of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt). However, this headquarters concurs with the recommendations above. Flexibility in the use of air assets should be the watchword.

### **(6) Armed Helicopter Employment:**

(a) Observation: Common to many missions involving the use of armed helicopters is that very few ground commanders understand the capabilities and particularly the limitations of the armed helicopter. In many instances they attempt to have the gunships engage targets for which they are totally unsuited. Each day the Air Mission Commander must waste valuable time educating the back seat in gunship employment.

(b) Evaluation: Back seats (Airmobile Task Force Commanders) improperly employ gunships and do not understand the limitations of the weapons systems. Even when back seats are so instructed they often ignore the advice.

(c) Command Action: The Air Mission Commander is the authority on the employment of aviation assets. As such he must act as a knowledgeable and articulate advisor to the Airmobile Task Force Commander. All unit commanders have been instructed to see that this is the rule rather than the exception. Airmobile Task Force Commanders can normally be expected to try and obtain the maximum support from aviation assets. Bearing this in mind it is the Air Mission Commander's task and responsibility to attempt to channel such support properly. A continuing effort is also under way to insure that back seats are made aware of the capabilities and limitations of all aviation assets.

### **(7) Armed Escort:**

(a) Observation: The standard size of the fire team on the mini-package (defined in l. g. (1) above) is two UH-1B/C helicopter gunships. During most operations a heavy fire team, three UH-1B/C gunships, has proven far superior. The greater flexibility, shock and fire power are invaluable during most phases of the airmobile assault. Two aircraft can provide the low reconnaissance while one can fly overhead in a general support role. Also with a third gunship on hand if one aircraft is rendered unflyable for any reason, no time is lost continuing the mission.

(b) Evaluation: Three helicopter gunships are superior to two on airmobile assaults. The increase in flexibility and fire power is substantial and far greater support is rendered the ground troops.

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(c) Command Action: Whenever possible three armed helicopter gunships are assigned to the mini-package. However, the sometimes low aircraft availability figures of UH-1B/C model aircraft coupled with the large, oft times insatiable, demands for gunship support during a normal days operations means that assets must be parcelled out in a judicious manner. Unit commanders have been instructed to use three gunships whenever such use is deemed necessary and can be provided in context with other missions.

**(8) Air Cavalry Operations:**

(a) Observation: The Air Cavalry troop is often employed in preplanned insertions rather than insertions based upon intelligence gathered by cavalry scout elements.

(b) Recommendation: Regimental advisors should be encouraged to advise their counterparts that insertions by the cavalry lift helicopters be made where the scout helicopters locate the enemy.

(c) Command Action: Such recommendations as (b) above have been made to supported units. The final authority as to the area of insertion is the ARVN Regimental Commander. Air Mission Commanders should continue to stress (b) above to the Airmobile Task Force Commander.

**(9) Scout Aircraft Target Engagement:**

(a) Observation: The Scout elements (OH-6A's) of the Air Cavalry troop are often requested to make target attacks on bunkers and fortified positions by Airmobile Task Force Commanders.

(b) Evaluation: Back seats often request the unwise and impossible of the OH-6A.

(c) Recommendation: Once enemy troops have been located by OH-6A Scout aircraft, either gunships should be called in or troops inserted with gunships in support. Regimental advisors should be made aware of the capabilities and limitations of the OH-6A in the Scout role.

(d) Command Action: The OH-6A should be used as a Scout or reconnaissance aircraft, not as a gunship. Air Mission Commanders have been directed to emphasize this and bring instances where this principle is violated to the attention of higher commanders. A constant training program is under way to familiarize ground force personnel with the capabilities and limitations of aviation assets.

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SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat), for the Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U).

(10) Swing Ships (Province administrative, cargo and liaison aircraft):

(a) Observation: Aircraft assigned daily as swing ships to the supported provinces are poorly used due to the poor prior planning on the part of the provinces. Supported units receive an aircraft daily from 0830 - 1630 and therefore are not required to plan either itineraries, loads or schedule stops. The aircraft becomes in essence a jeep. There is a significant duplication of effort and waste because of this. Too much time, effort and money are spent getting and keeping aircraft flyable to then have the flight time and utilization frittered away thusly.

(b) Evaluation: Poor prior planning and a lack of real need for the level of support rendered causes mis-utilization and waste in aircraft assets. Tactical emergencies arise from time to time but do to wasteago during earlier periods sufficient aircraft are unavailable during these periods of need.

(c) Recommendation: That supported provinces carefully plan the day's activities and that maximum utilization with minimum time be the guide line. Provinces or sectors should not be provided an aircraft unless they have a need for one.

(d) Command Action: The province swing ships have priority over all other missions on a daily basis. Higher headquarters has been informed of the waste and inefficiency in some of the missions. Additionally, aviators have been directed to assist supported sectors and provinces in planning missions so as to achieve maximum efficiency.

d. Organization: None.

e. Training: None.

f. Logistics:

(1) Shortage of tool kits:

(a) Observation: The number of tool kits, aircraft mechanic's - general FSN #4920-906-9739, authorized for the aviation companies (assault helicopter) in the battalion is eighty each. As an example the number of these kits in the 191st Aviation Company (Alt Hel) is 27. These items are on valid requisition.

(b) Evaluation: The shortages of tool kits make it difficult for mechanics and flight crews to complete work properly.

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(c) Recommendation: Emphasis at higher headquarters should be placed on procuring the required tool kits.

(d) Command Action: Tool kits remain on valid requisition. Subordinate units have been directed to update requisitions as necessary and make timely follow ups.

(2) O-1 engine shortages:

(a) Observation: The average waiting period for engines (EDP) for O-1 aircraft is 30 to 45 days.

(b) Evaluation: Aircraft that are needed in support of combat operations remain EDP for long periods even after timely follow up.

(c) Recommendation: Steps should be taken to re-evaluate requisitioning and supply channel procedures and to expedite normal resupply of EDP engines.

(d) Command Action: Continued EDP requisitioning.

(3) Stream Liner:

(a) Observation: By virtue of a new part supply system titled STREAM LINER, participating units are able to maintain an exceptionally low "NORS" (Not Operationally Ready Supply) rate. Requisitions are forwarded directly to AMMC (Aviation Material Maintenance Command) at Saigon daily.. Parts come back on the same day in the case of EDP's and the next day for non-EDP's. Units maintain a PLL of only about 500 (most commonly used) items.

(b) Evaluation: Stream Liner is an effective and simple system that provides participating units with maximum support in procuring controlled aircraft parts. An exceptionally low "NORS" rate is the result.

(c) Recommendation: Stream Liner should be placed in operation throughout Viet Nam.

(d) Command Action: None at this time; concur with recommendation.

g. (U) Communications: None.

h. (U) Material: None.

*R. I. McRill*

BILLY I. McRILL  
LTC INF  
Commanding

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as

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AVBAGC (24 May 70) 1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 13th Aviation Battalion  
(Combat) for Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

DA, HQ, 164TH AVIATION GROUP (COMBAT), APO 96215, 24 May 1970

TO: Department of the Army, ATTN: ACSFOR  
Commanding General, 1st Aviation Brigade, ATTN: AVBAGC-0, APO 96384

1. (U) The attached 13th CAB ORLL for period ending 30 April 1970 has been reviewed by this headquarters.

2. (U) The following comments are made on the report:

a. (U) Para 2 a (1), page 7, and para 2 a (2), page 8: Concur with comments on personnel and MOS shortages. By closely monitoring the strength of each unit this headquarters has been able to effect an equitable distribution to subordinate units, however, an overall shortage of personnel exists. This close monitoring also provides as equitable a distribution by MOS as possible. Higher headquarters has been kept advised of personnel shortage by number, grade and MOS.

b. (U) Para 2 b (1), page 8: Concur with comments. 164th CAG has required subordinate commands to conduct periodic security classes for all SCI users to minimize negligent compromises. Unannounced frequency changes by supported ground units do occur. Close liaison through the Army Aviation Element, IV Corps, will do a great deal toward minimizing this problem.

c. (U) Para 2 b (2), page 9: Concur with comments. Supported commands have been required to provide secure facilities for storage of cryptographic material.

d. (U) Para 2 c (1), pages 9 and 10: Non-Concur. At this stage of the war, many small insertions searching for contact are more useful than a few large insertions. While size of units to be employed will depend upon the situation, small forces normally are adequate and seldom get into engagements which cannot be rapidly reinforced without unacceptable losses. Good aerial reconnaissance prior to insertion can provide assurance that a small force will not be overwhelmed after landing.

e. (U) Para 2 c (2), page 10: Concur.

f. Para 2 c (3), page 11: Concur.

g. Para 2 c (4), pages 11 and 12: Concur.

h. Para 2 c (5), pages 12 and 13: Non-concur with inclusion of comments on activities and units for which the battalion has no responsibility or authority and are outside its area of operation.

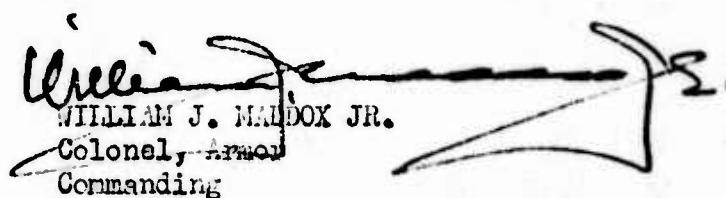
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AVBACE (24 May 70) 1st Ind.

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 13th Aviation Battalion  
(Combat) for Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CEFOR-65 (A2) (U)

- i. Para 2 c (6): Concur with comments. This headquarters is continuing to place emphasis on the Air Mission Task Force Commander (AMTC) Orientation Program and air mission commander proficiency. The AMTC orientation is a four day program conducted at this headquarters to train advisors and their ARVN counterparts to use aviation assets made available to them in the most effective manner.
- j. Para 2 c (7), page 13: Concur with comments.
- k. Para 2 c (8), page 14: Concur with comments.
- l. Para 2 c (9), page 14: Concur with comments except that the troop commander is the final authority on how his aircraft are employed. Scouts are for locating the enemy and guns are for heavy fires. Both must be present and work together. Proper employment of all types of aircraft are emphasized, in the 164th CAG AMTC school.
- m. Para 2 c (10), page 15: Non-concur. This subject was studied at length from input provided by the battalion. A very small percentage of aircraft time was found to be not well utilized. A continuing education program in proper utilization of aircraft is in effect to gain maximum benefit from each flying hour.
- n. Para 2 f (1), page 15: Non concur. When this problem was brought to the attention of this headquarters it was found in most cases that the units were not using proper supply procedures nor were they taking proper follow-up action. This headquarters will continue to place emphasis on proper supply actions and follow-up procedures to obtain the needed tools.
- o. Para 2 f (2), page 16: Concur.
- p. Para 2 f (3), page 16: Concur.



WILLIAM J. MADDOX JR.  
Colonel, Armor  
Commanding

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AVIAGC-0 (9 May 70) 2d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat), for the Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (M2) (U)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE, APO 96384 27 JUN 1970

TO: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVIAGC-DST,  
APO 96375  
Commander-in-Chief, United States Army Pacific, ATTN: CPOP-Y1,  
APO 96558

CC: Assistant Chief of Staff For Force Development, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat) for the period ending 30 April 1970 and concurs with the comments as indorsed.

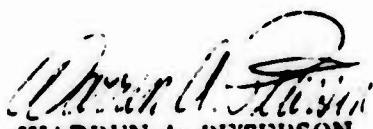
2. The following comments are submitted:

a. Paragraph 2a(1), page 7, discusses low fill level in the B-1 Ban's. The 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat) enlisted strength is presently 89.4% of authorized. The 162d Assault Helicopter Company is at 83.9%, and the 164th Aviation Group (Combat) is 95.9% of authorized EM. A study is underway to equalize enlisted strength throughout the Brigade.

b. Paragraph 2f(2), page 16, discusses the delay in receipt of O-1 aircraft engines. This problem is currently under study at AMC to determine the cause of this problem. An adequate supply of O-1 engines is on hand.

c. Paragraph 2f(3), page 16, discusses placing Operation Stream Line in operation throughout Vietnam. This operation is a test project. The scope and area of operation will be determined by this test.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

  
WARREN A. PETERSON  
CPT, AGC  
ASST AG

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AVHGC-DST (9 May 70) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat), for the Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

Headquarters, United States Army, Vietnam, APO San Francisco 96375 1

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT, APO 96558

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 30 April 1970 from Headquarters, 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat) and concurs with the comments of indorsing headquarters.

2. (C) Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning "Low Enlisted Strength," page 7, paragraph 2a(1): Concur. Continued emphasis is placed on accurate and timely submission of enlisted requisition requirements for the command. However, though there continues to be critical aviation MOS shortages, it should be pointed out that the overall 1st Aviation Brigade enlisted strength posture as of 30 April 1970 was 19,002 authorized, 18,458 assigned, or 97.13 percent of authorization. Status as of 5 July 1970 was 19,063 authorized, 18,526 assigned, or 97.18 percent of authorization. No action by USARPAC is recommended. Enlisted fill of total requisition requirements submitted by this command is required by DA.

b. Reference item concerning "Enlisted MOS Shortages," page 8, paragraph 2a(2): Concur. Incoming personnel are reported by PMOS to this headquarters for appropriate assignment. Procedures have been established for replacement battalions to identify and report incoming personnel (E1 - E6) to this headquarters who hold a SMOS or AMOS which is critically short within the command. Continued emphasis is given to filling the critical MOS shortages within the command. No action by USARPAC is recommended. In addition to required fill action by DA on enlisted requisitions, continued emphasis should be placed on the enlisted fill of those MOS indicated on the monthly USARV Critically Short MOS List submitted by this headquarters to DA, OPO, ATTN: EPOPMA.

c. Reference item concerning "Problems with Crypto Storage at Remote Sites," page 9, paragraph 2b(2): Concur. Chapter 12, AR 380-40 and USARV CEI item 10 contain modified security requirements for mobile installation under specified conditions. Operators and users with appropriate clearance need not be authorized access to crypto material as long as Key list extracts in excess of 14 days are not on hand. Un-keyed DY-28s can remain in the aircraft as long as the area is under control of US Military guards. US Military guards do not require a clearance. Unit has been so advised.

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AVHGC-DST (9 May 70) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation  
Battalion (Combat), for the Period Ending 30 April 1970,  
RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

d. Reference item concerning "O-1 Engine Shortages," page 16  
paragraph 2f(2) and para 2b, 2d indorsement. A significant contributing  
factor in this situation was the impending move of the 388th Trans Co  
to Phu Loi from Vung Tau (388th is DSU for certain 13th Bn units).  
Engines are on hand at AMMC and are prepositioned. Units have been  
experiencing no difficulty in obtaining O-1 engines recently. No action  
by USARPAC or DA is recommended.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



CF:  
13th Avn Bn (Cbt)  
HQ, 1st Avn Bde

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GPOP-DT (9 May 70) 4th Ind (U)  
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 13th Aviation Battalion  
(Combat), for Period Ending 30 April 1970,  
RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 21 AUG 70

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department  
of the Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

*D.D. Cline*  
D.D. CLINE  
2LT, AGO  
Ass't AD

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14 May 1970

**SUBJECT:** Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat), for the Period Ending 30 April 1970 RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

162nd Avn Co (Can Tho)	121st Avn Co (Can Tho)	121st Avn Co (Can Tho)	221st Avn Co (Can Tho)	336th Avn Co (Can Tho)	C Troop 16th Cav (Can Tho)	347th ASD (Can Tho)
111st Med (Soc Trang)	IHC (Soc Trang)	IHC (Soc Trang)	13th Sec Plt (Soc Trang)	13th Sec Plt (Soc Trang)	13th Sec Plt (Soc Trang)	13th Sec Plt (Soc Trang)
11th Det 5th Weather Squadn (Soc Trang)						

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Asgd  
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Attached

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14 May 1970

**SUBJECT:** Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat), for the Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)  
 (U) 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat) Unit Strength breakdown by Unit, Direct Hire, MOS shortages, and Civilian Technical Representatives

**UNIT STRENGTH**

UNIT	OFFICERS			WARRANT OFFICERS			ENLISTED			TOTAL		
	Auth	Asgd	Pres	Auth	Asgd	Pres	Auth	Asgd	Pres	Auth	Asgd	
HHC	19	20	19	3	10	10	95	94	92	117	124	
41st Med	1	0	0	0	0	0	7	9	9	8	9	
262nd FA	0	0	0	1	0	0	8	11	9	9	11	
121 Avn	19	13	13	51	47	47	218	178	173	288	238	
162 Avn	19	14	14	51	46	45	218	172	168	288	232	
191 Avn	19	13	13	51	45	47	218	171	167	288	236	
221 Avn	41	18	18	2	8	8	103	94	91	146	120	
336 Avn	19	11	11	51	47	46	218	192	183	283	250	
C Trp	16	19	19	34	31	30	216	195	197	266	249	
TOTAL	153	108	107	244	238	233	1301	1123	1085	1698	1469	

**DIRECT HIRE**

UNIT	Authorised Vietnamese	On Hand
121st Avn Co	16	13
162nd Avn Co	8	7
191st Avn Co	8	2
221st Avn Co	3	0
336th Avn Co	15	14
HHC	4	4
C Trp	0	0
TOTAL	54	40

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AVBN-OC

14 May 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat), for the Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS C3FOR-65 (R2) Unit, Direct Hire, MOS shortages and Civilian Technical Representatives

Shortages MOS Report (50% Strength of Loss)

<u>MOS</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>AUTH</u>	<u>ASGD</u>
11B1Y	Pathfinder	4	0
17E10	Power Gun Operator	1	0
26320	Radar Mechanic	1	0
31B20	Radio Mechanic	6	2
35N20	Avionic Control Equip Rpmn	5	0
36J10	Switchboard Operator	1	0
52J10	Pwr Gen Equip Opr/Mech Appr	4	0
67A10	Hel Rpmn Appr	70	24
67B30	Tech Insp (Airplane)	3	1
67N30	Tech Insp (Hel)	16	5
68A10	Acft Maint Appr (Eng Rpr)	10	0
71G20	Med Records Specialist	1	0
71P50	Flight Operations Sergeant	1	0
71T20	Equip Reports Clerk	10	3
72B20	Manual TT Operator	2	1
94A10	Cook's Helper	6	2
96B20	Intl Operations Sergeant	1	0

Civilian Technical Representatives

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>ASGD</u>
HHC, 13th Avn Bn (Cpt)	0
121st Avn Co (Aslt Hel)	2
162nd Avn Co (Aslt Hel)	2
191st Avn Co (Aslt Hel)	2
221st Avn Co (Util A/P)	0
336th Avn Co (Aslt Hel)	2
C Troop, 16th Air Cav Sqd	0

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**SUBJECT:** Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion  
(Combat), for the Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

Company	UH-1B		UH-1C		UH-1D/H		O-1		OH-6A/ OH-58A		U6A		AH-1G	
	Auth	OH	Auth	OH	Auth	OH	Auth	OH	Auth	OH	Auth	OH	Auth	OH
HC	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	3	0	1	1	0	0	0
121st Avn Co	8	8	0	0	22	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
162nd Avn Co	0	0	8	7	22	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
191st Avn Co	0	0	8	7	22	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
221st Avn Co	0	0	0	0	0	32	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
336th Avn Co	0	0	8	6	22	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C RRP	0	0	0	0	8	8	0	0	9	0	9	9	9	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>

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AVRAEM-OC

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion  
 (Combat), for the Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)  
 (U) 13th Aviation Battalion Operational Results

14 May 1970

UNIT	TROOPS LIFTED	CARGO TONS	ENEMY KILLED	STRUCTURES DEST	SAPMIS DEST	ACFT LOSS	CHET DAM	SOFFEES
121st Avn Co	35,675	322	1401	1,621	1,210	1	4	20,753
162nd Avn Co	33,349	277	238	854	575	0	0	12,599
191st Avn Co	31,986	71	291	307	343	2	2	21,191
221st Avn Co	0	0	156	50	63	0	0	5,339
336th Avn Co	31,312	422	241	1,787	1,327	0	10	21,060
C RPT	6,213	0	132	882	262	0	16	4,847
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>138,575</b>	<b>1,092</b>	<b>1,455</b>	<b>6,796</b>	<b>3,790</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>85,798</b>

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**UNCLASSIFIED**

Security Classification

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D**

(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified)

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3. REPORT TITLE

**Operational Report-Lessons Learned, HQ, 13th Aviation Battalion**

4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates)

**Experiences of unit engaged in counterinsurgency operations, 1 Feb to 30 Apr 70.**

5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name)

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